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C O N F I D E N T I A L HARARE 000672

SIPDIS

AF FOR DAS T. WOODS  
AF/S FOR B. NEULING  
OVP FOR NULAND  
NSC FOR DNSA ABRAMS, SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR C. COURVILLE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/10/2015  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [ZI](#) [ZANU](#) [PF](#) [MDC](#)  
SUBJECT: POST ELECTION VIOLENCE YIELDS FIRST POLITICAL  
MURDER OF THE YEAR

Classified By: AMBASSADOR CHRISTOPHER W. DELL UNDER SECTION 1.4 b/d

11. (C) MDC spokesperson for Mashonaland West Biggie Haurubi confirmed to poloff on May 9 the circumstances surrounding the April 29 murder of MDC activist Moffat Ebrahim, which had been reported by the local press. According to Haurubi, ZANU-PF supporters in the Kashimhure Village near Karoi were petitioning to have Ebrahim expelled because of his political affiliation. Haurubi indicated that Ebrahim was summoned to appear at a village-level tribunal )- essentially a kangaroo court often overseen by the village chief -\* on April 25, but refused to attend after hearing rumors that ZANU-PF supporters were planning to kill him at the meeting. Haurubi alleged that the ZANU-PF supporters subsequently had Ebrahim arrested for burning the house of a ZANU-PF supporter, but police released Ebrahim for lack of evidence. According to Haurubi the ruling party supporters and war veterans then abducted Ebrahim on April 28 and took him to the house of ZANU-PF supporter Elphas Gora, where he was interrogated, tortured, and killed.

12. (C) Haurubi advised that local police were investigating the incident, although the MDC expected the police investigation to be inconclusive. He said that police continued to avoid decisive action in politically motivated crimes: they typically either did nothing or, at best, arrested but failed to prosecute members of each party. Haurubi indicated that such "even-handedness" systematically favored elements that were willing to employ violence to advance their interests. Haurubi lamented that the non-violent MDC had little recourse to discourage ZANU-PF from future acts of violence other than to publicize the murder. Following Ebrahim's murder, Haurubi indicated that MDC supporters had fled their homes and were hiding in the bush to avoid further violence or potential arrest.

13. (C) COMMENT: Ebrahim's murder and the systematic persecution of MDC supporters in rural areas highlights the challenge the MDC is dealing with as it attempts to increase its support in these areas. Rural residents are acutely aware that suspected MDC supporters face difficulty accessing food distributions, obtaining and sustaining employment, and even traveling, as ZANU-PF youth threaten local bus and taxi drivers providing transport for MDC members. This pervasive climate of intimidation no doubt significantly cut into the MDC's rural vote in March and will have to be overcome if the party is to increase its base of support in rural provinces.

DELL